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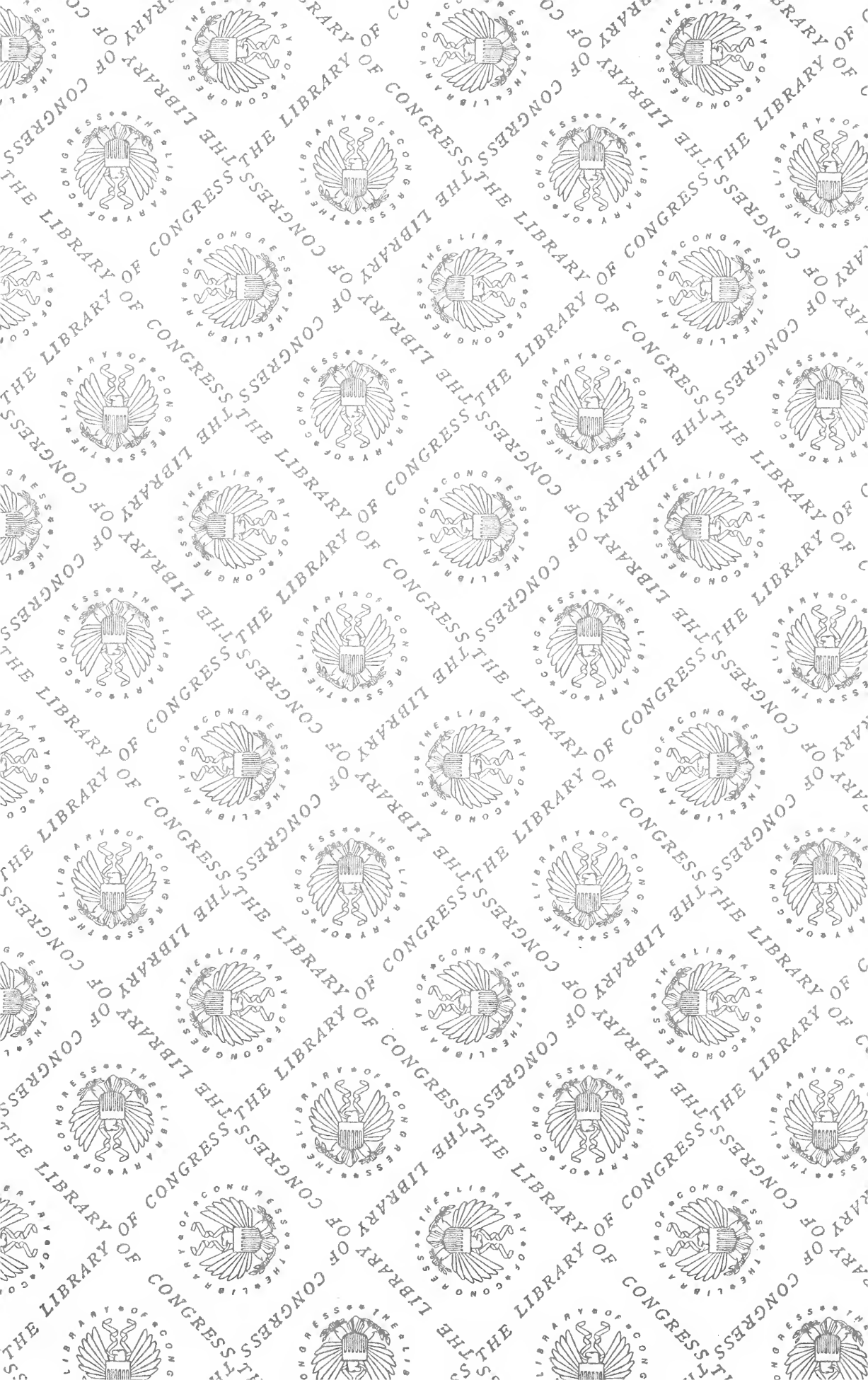
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Selected Verses

By DAVID GRAHAM ADEE

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THE SENTENCE OF ROBERT EMMET.

A CROWDED court, a breathless bar,
Both judge and jury flushed with rage,
A fearless felon there to mar
And blot with shame Britannia's page!
A hero brave, a rebel bold,
A patriot to make tyrants pause,
A man of gallant, martial mould,
A martyr in his country's cause!

And who the prisoner in the dock?
And what his crime against the state?
And why a doom worse than the block
Pronounced on one so good and great?
A name with honor to be known
In every age and every land
Where freedom bravely holds her own
And freemen rally, hand in hand!

O Robert Emmet, glorious son
Of liberty and Erin's love,
Thy dying words have but begun
To echo to the skies above!
Thy crime, thy country's pride and boast,
Thy death the dearest men may crave,
To drive the despot from her coast,
A people to unchain and save!

The brutal Toler jibes and jeers,
The sneering Plunket smiles in scorn,
While Irishmen are moved to tears
And generous breasts with grief are torn,
As Emmet dares the bench's worst,
Its ruthless wrath, the hangman's knot,
A sentence cruel and accurst,
A fate that cannot be forgot!

And all for love of native land,
Of friends and fields and firesides dear,
He stands a champion, royal, grand,
Of noble front without a fear!
His cheeks unblanched, his pulse unchecked,
To face the gallows and the grave,
A victim for the altar decked
With blessings that about him wave!

"Let no man write my epitaph,
But lay my memory in the tomb
Until the bitter cup we quaff
Be wreathed with the shamrock's bloom!
And dear old Ireland takes her place
Among the nations of the world,
The sunburst lighting up her face,
Her emerald flag again unfurled!"

He died amid the heartfelt grief
Of comrades, brothers, in the strife,
None strong enough to yield relief,
No pity there to spare his life!
And Britain's doom was breathed that morn
In judgment on the rising gale,
For vows of dire revenge were borne
On sighs that soon became a wail!

The life that Emmet freely gave
Is cherished in a nation's soul!
The love he bore springs from his grave
To bless the earth while time shall roll!
His sacred gift, a sainted name,
Hibernia, is forever thine,
To lead thy sons to endless fame,
Thy daughters to a holy shrine!

The Harp of Tara sounds once more,
For patriot fingers sweep the strings,
And heroes throng the blood-stained shore
Whose cheer above the battle rings!
The seed that swells in Irish sod
Was sown by hands upraised on high
In prayer and reverence to God,
And martyr-harvests never die!

The soul of Emmet marches on
Among the silent, serried ranks,
With steadfast eyes toward the sun,
Upon eternity's green banks!
The book of fate is never shut,
Nor dry the ink on history's page,
Till right above the wrong is put
And justice triumphs o'er the age!

MOSAICS IN MEMORY.

"Mutum est pictura poema."

CROWN cities of Italia! Fair Firenze
Clasping the Arno with voluptuous arms!
Rare palaces of art whose treasures frenzy
Rapt worshippers of Praxiteles's charms!
Pitti, Uffizi! Twin repositories
Whose stores of sculpture tell of Grecian skill!
Venus Medici! Poets sing thy glories!
Thy lines æsthetic Phidian-fancies fill!

Venezia! Glancing golden in the moonlight,
Soft stroking Adriatic's waving curls!
Thou art 'mid radiant ripples, growing soon bright,
With myriad gondolas whose tall prow purls!
San Marco, Doges' Dungeons, Span of Sighs!
Vexed is the mind with memories and dreams;
For peer or peasant by the headsman dies:
Thy page, Venezia, with illusions teems!

Gay Napoli! Sweet city of the sea,
Near by Vesuvius's molten mouth!
Thy breezes and blue billows float to me
Fragrant with spices from the fruitful South!
Isle Capri! Oranges and nectarines,
Blue grotto, and bouquet of daintiest wines!
These, with round ridges, deck the smiling scenes,
And scant-garbed rustics pruning luscious vines!

Imperial Roma! Cæsar's costly throne!
Leaning upon the Tiber in decay!
What wonders to the world thy soul-felt moan
With whispers weird imparts and points the way!
Mortality's mausoleum! Thus great peoples,
Kingdoms and empires each in season roll!
Their falling stones and overturning steeples
Mere atoms on Eternity's grand scroll!

Four cities like to these no country other
Than ripe Italia 'neath her orient sky
Can claim—of music, heavenly art, the mother—
Whose mighty Creed the centuries hold high!
Thy knell once sounded, and no longer swelling
From sea to sea and mount to mount supreme
Thy clarion calls—but chime wild echoes telling
Of Romans waking from a weird, dark dream.

ROME, 1871.

AT ROME.

AS Pius passed I held my breath—
My heart stood still as if in death.

Why should an unbeliever feel
Such awe and superstition steal?

A kind old man with silvery hair
And face sweet with religion rare.

Methought it is not all alone
Because he sits the papal throne;

It is not that he reigns a king
And wears the sacred signet ring,

Or that he is the father here
To chide the sin, to dry the tear;

Or that he wields the holy keys
For penitents upon their knees.

Not these the reasons, right or wrong,
I trembled as he rode along

In chariot rich with gems and gold,
To bless the children of his fold.

But that the heart of human kind,
Weary of groping, faint and blind,

Despairing of the unseen power
Coming to earth in longed-for hour

To speak to prayer, to smile on praise,
To cheer the faithful's wistful gaze,

Had clothed this presence with all good,
To give the sinners saintly food.

To set before the senses' soul
Comfort and consolation's dole.

Two thousand years have given place
Since men have looked upon God's face;

And the soul yearns for something real
To represent the rapt ideal.

If that mankind have sought to give
A form to goodness while they live,

Will not the One supreme above
Reward their longing with His love?

Thus, as I viewed the emblem there,
An aureole seemed to glint the air.

My spirit thrilled in blent accord
With earth's great type of Heaven's Lord.

1871.

ERIN GO BRAGH.

I STOOD beside Killarney's lakes
When autumn tints were in the sky,
And emerald sward with shamrock flakes
Charmed gratefully the eye.

I thought of Erin's glorious past,
The flag that waved beside my own
When Southern shot fell thick and fast
Where brothers' blood was sown.

I thought of Emmet, brave and young,
Who died to hallow Erin's name;
I thought of Carolan who flung
Abroad in song her fame.

Of Moore and his sad patriot strain,
The Harp that once thro' Tara's Halls,
The Minstrel Boy who now again
For his dear country falls.

I thought of Curran's classic word
That braved a furious, frowning court;
Of Grattan's that the nation heard
With faith and freedom fraught.

I thought of many a merry day
Of laugh and jest and native wit,
Of Irish jigs and pipers' play
With dew to moisten it.

Of jaunting cars and kirtles red,
Of sparkling eyes for mischief made,
Of Boyne, where Celtic blood was shed
In streams that never fade.

And as I gazed on Erin green
The waters of the lake were stirred,
And sunset shed a dazzling sheen
As sang the vesper bird.

Farewell, sweet land to sorrow born,
A soulfelt tear is fondly thine!
Thy sons my country's crest have worn,
Our loving hearts entwine.

THE GRAVE OF MARSHAL NEY.

IN Père la Chaise, when jasmine blooms,
And sheds its fragrance o'er the tombs,
The tourist from our friendly land,
With red-bound guidebook in his hand,
Oft seeks the grave
Where no flags wave
Of the bravest of Napoleon's band.

No blazonry proclaims his fame,
No stone records the hero's name;
But he, in a neglected square,
Of soldier's grand insignia bare,
Lies 'neath the sod
Where grasses nod
And breezes sound like bugles' blare.

Brave Michel Ney, who won the day
On many a field of desperate fray,
Spurred by Napoleon's eagle glance,
Marshal of proud, imperious France,
Brilliant thy dreams
As bayonet gleams,
Or clash of sword and flash of lance!

Of Austerlitz and Austria's might,
A host at morn, a horde at night!
Of Wagram, whose artillery roar
The old world shook from shore to shore!
Of Waterloo,
Where thou wast true
Unto thy Emperor to the core!

Did Wellington and Blücher feel
A foeman worthier of their steel,
In all their long career of war,
Than when that day of blood they saw,
    Far in the front,
    To bear the brunt,
Ney lead the Guard in death's grim jaw?

Hail to the hero, through and through,
Loyal as brave, and brave as true,
Whom, daring for his emperor all,
The allies shot, and o'er his pall
    Incense upcurled
    And flags were furled
As France bewailed her marshal's fall!

THE SCOTS AT WATERLOO.

DOWN in the dike like kye we lay,
Back of Hougomont's brown chateau,
From cloudy noon till the close of day,
With cannon over our ranks at play,
Highlanders brave of feud and fray,
Bonny blue-bonnets ranged in a row.

France was massed on the plain around,
Bonaparte at her gallant head;
Black dragoons plowing up the ground,
And guns at work with a thunder sound,
While we of the plaid beneath the mound
Idly loitered asleep—or dead.

What the deil was the duke about?
Prone our lines in the crowded trench,
Torn by artillery inside out,
The flags of the enemy far aflout
As if the British had had the rout,
Lads who always had flogged the French.

Sergeants and soldiers wounded, lost,
Shot to death in that streaming ditch,
Stubborn as stone at whatever cost,
Splinters of shells upon us tossed,
The Grenadiers of the Guards thus forced
To linger like girls, at fever pitch.

The sun sank low, and the crisis came:
British bull-dogs had stood for hours,
Worn and bleeding, but falling game,
Exposed to a sheet of smoke and flame
For the sake of old England's endless fame.
And now the fate of the beaten ours.

Onward marched the Imperial Guard,
Michel Ney at its bristling front:
Where the wisdom of watch and ward,
There, on the ground so wet and hard,
For bodies broken and bruised and scarred,
Ours of the kilts who bore the brunt?

Yet deep in the dike like dolts we sat,
Back of Hougomont's brown chateau,
Some half-kneeling and some down flat,
Wondering what our ain Wellesley was at,
Astride of his gray in a plain cocked-hat,
Silently biding the coming blow.

A stir and shout all along the line,
Hoarse as the roar of a Highland flood,
The voice of the Thames, the Seine, the Rhine,
When winds and waters in war combine,
Heating the heart like a draught of wine,
And setting on fire our fighting blood.

Galloped the staff to the van of the ranks,
Riding afore it the iron man,
Grim of feature and gaunt of flanks,
Who had all day cantered along the banks,
His gray eye fixed on the charging Franks,
As steady the tide of the struggle ran.

Rang out his words like a pibroch-blast,
Firm and free as the drum's quick roll,
"Up and at them!" and bold and fast
We sprang to arms for the fight at last,
And over the mead our columns passed
To face the French as they climbed the knoll.

Breast to breast with our bayonets keen,
Knee to knee as we thrust straight home!
Red the grass that was once so green,
Fatal the flash of the steel's white sheen!
Sheaves of flesh would the reapers glean,
Rich the furrows with fertile loam.

Small avail the fierce fury we met,
Mont St. Jean was a triumph gained;
Ere summer's sun o'er the land had set
We saw a sight we could ne'er forget,
A strewn field haunted with horrors yet
On which the star of Napoleon waned.

For Gael met Gaul 'mid the crash of guns,
The clatter of hoofs, and the clash of steel,
As rushed the Romans to meet the Huns.
No Scot of us all a sword-stroke shuns
Or off from the death-shot ever runs,
Whether the bout bring woe or weal.

Up from the earth where we'd lain since morn
Back of Hougomont's brown chateau,
Sir Arthur summoned his spears of corn
To yield him a harvest of battle born,
Scotish chiels whom the kilts adorn
Alike well-worthy of friend and foe.

And when ye gaze on the golden grain
That waves in the winds that softly woo,
Ye'll ken that the laddies who knelt in the rain
All through the throes of impatience and pain
Were the tartans who drove back the French again
And gave to Wellington Waterloo.

LITERARY LUXURY.

WHEN of a winter night I sit
Before my study fire,
I love to muse o'er authors' wit
Or list the poet's lyre,
To quick forget the day's reverse
And lose all thought of pelf,
And take for better or for worse
My books from off their shelf.

'Tis seldom worse, I do confess,
For few so true as these
Which tenderly my hands caress
That lie upon my knees,
And lift the mind to ideal things,
To humorous flights of mirth,
As soars the soul on fancy's wings
To realms afar from earth.

If I am weary and alone
What comrade is so dear
As Goldsmith's Vicar, all my own
His Ingleside's warm cheer!
Olivia beside me knits,
Sophia lights my pipe,
And manly Burchell silent sits
Of heroes finest type.

If jovial, Lawrence Sterne I scan
And laugh with honest Trim
At Uncle Toby, brave old man,
Or Widow Wadman's whim,
And drop a tear to drown the oath
An angel's pinions hide—
Humor and pathos, sisters both,
O'er Tristram's page preside.

Fielding and Smollett while an hour
With wizard's wand away,
Though gallant Tom falls in the power
Of Bellaston, the gay,
And Random is a trifle wild,
And Clinker over cold,
And fair Sophia all so mild,
And Peregrine too bold.

What wonderland in Dickens glows—
Young Copperfield at school,
Wilkins Micawber's chronic woes,
And Heep, more knave than fool;
James Steerforth dashing to the end,
Aunt Betsy Trotwood, too,
And Dick, the oracle and friend,
With Dora, crowd the view.

Ah, kindly Mr. Pickwick this!
And that poor Little Nell!
And there we see Bob Cratchit's bliss
With Tiny Tim grown well!
God bless the merry Christmas time
With generous festive cheer—
List to the music of the chime!
How now? A smile and tear?

Fill up the fire and trim the light,
Draw up an easy chair,
For Thackeray it is to-night
With wicked Becky there!
But see! The dear old Colonel comes,
With Clive and prattling Boy,
As Esmond into Flanders roams
And Beatrix beams with joy.

Hah! Irving with his Dutchman dight
In breeks a baker's dozen,
And Rip, the idle drunken wight,
His shrewish Frau to cozen;
Katrina's blooming cheeks are red
And ripe with roseate blushes,
At Crane the Horseman hurls his head
As o'er the bridge he rushes.

Of poets, Poe drops in the most
And side by side with Scott,
Tho' Byron often rules the roast
With Robie Burns, I wot;
While Moore and Hood, those genial bards,
Knock gently at my door
With Tennyson and leave their cards
Where Shakespeare called before.

Welcome, old cronies of the brain,
I'll love you to the last,
And greet you o'er and o'er again
Till sight and sense are past!
I'll wring the trusty hero's hand,
I'll kiss the heroine's brow,
And hie me into fairyland
With all my heart, I trow.

Pray God, while through the world I tread,
This motley, checkered scene,
These orchards luscious fruit shall shed,
These fields be always green!
For on life's fateful, transient stage,
Though golden locks turn gray,
Mine are the friends that never age—
To them I pen my lay.

LONDON, 1873.

A LIFE AND A LOCH.

THE wave rolls out and the wave rolls in—
List to its din;
While the broken keel on the rugged shore
Tells a story of ruin and wreck once more
As ever has been.

The surf breaks fierce on the rough black rock—
Hark to the shock!
But the boatman who held the prow to the spray
When the morning beckoned the night away
Lies in the Loch.

The tide sweeps close to the gudewife's feet—
Sair does she greet!
But the waters will never wash back again
The smile and the kiss and the love they have slain
However they beat.

The froth caps sparkle blithesome and gay
In foam and spray;
But one heart never from sleep awoke
And the other in silence and sorrow broke,
Alas the day!

And the crests and the surf and the tide still throng,
And moan their song
As the mournful story their music tells
In every sigh the wild wind swells
And wails along.

THE BOATMEN OF BREE.

ON the gray sands they are sadly sitting,
Heavy their hearts as the rocks of Bree,
Clumsy the fingers so busily knitting
Or flinging round pebbles into the sea;
Flinging smooth pebbles into the sea
That surges and foams on the coasts of Bree.

"O, wasting waters! O, wandering waters!
O, wild white surf of the shores of Bree!
Tell us, puir bodies of boatmen's daughters,
Where are our gudemen upon the sea?
Where are our fishermen on the sea?
Our bonny brave lads of the isles o' Bree."

Cold comes the spray from the stormy waters,
Hoarse fall the voices of wind and sea,
Crying: "Sad tidings we bring, puir daughters,
From the salt waves of the raging sea;
Your sailors are drowned in the trough of the sea,
In the billows that break on the shores of Bree."

On the wet sands they are idly sitting,
Far off their thoughts as they gaze out to sea;
Listless the hands once so busily knitting,
Broken their hearts on the reefs of Bree,
Shipwrecked their lives in the wash of the sea,
The breakers that buried the boatmen of Bree.

AN EASTER CAROL.

CHIME cheerily, ye Easter bells,
With rapturous rhythm ring!
In every tone an anthem swells,
The peal the wondrous story tells
Of man's arisen King.

There is a glory in that morn
Beyond all other days—
The cerements of the grave are torn,
The dead to endless life are born,
Amid resounding praise.

As One immortal thus arose,
Most human yet divine,
So flees the darkest of our foes,
So falls the burden of our woes,
Brothers, both yours and mine.

Look upward from these finite bands,
That chain us to the earth!
Man has the help of angel hands
To lift him to celestial lands
And greet the spirit's birth.

Joyous the hymn the season sings
Of hope and life and love,
That solace to the longing brings
Who wait to soar on seraph's wings
Through faith to realms above.

He is the Way, the Truth, the Life,
The soul's all-saving leaven;
Turn from the cares of worldly strife,
The ills with which our days are rife,
Unto Our Friend in heaven!

Chime merrily, ye Easter bells,
With rapturous rhythm ring!
In every tone an anthem swells,
The peal the glorious story tells
Of earth's eternal King.

New York City, 1873.

THE OLD MEETING-HOUSE.

I RESTED in a ruined meeting-house,
And phantoms of the generations gone
Came round about me, reveries to arouse
Of all the phases to which flesh is born.

I saw the pulpit as it stood of yore,
The prayerful preacher telling of the tomb,
The village choir perched up above the door,
And patient listeners in pensive gloom.

Yet not all so, for here and there a look
Of faith and trust supreme would haply glow
And turn devoutly to the sacred book,
In glad submission to the lot below.

On yonder high-backed bench a tiny waif
Of weak humanity in parental arms
Abides the christening, innocently safe
From all the horrors of heretic harms.

A bridal pair, with tell-tale blush aglow,
Await impatiently the holy word
Which binds about their hearts the nuptial bow,
The sweetest sound that either ever heard.

And when the sermon ends, the tolling bell,
The silent retinue, the sable pall,
The wail of anguish, the sad story tell
Of sin's just sentence resting upon all.

Those green young boughs fresh budding into bloom,
Those bent old branches weather-worn and gray
Alike have passed the portals of the tomb
And melted like the morning mist away.

Soon sinking as a sunset out of view,
The congregation, choir and preacher fade,
And but remain the antiquated pew
And empty pulpit, broken and decayed.

And so, methought, the generations glide,
And vanish like the visions of the night,
Nor tarry on th' inexorable tide
That wafts the soul eternal into light.

SCONSET LIGHTS.

SCONSET Lights are burning low
Through winding sheets of whirling snow;
Whitecap waves wash madly forth,
Surging combers from the North;
Black old ocean fumes and fights
By the rocks round Sconset Lights.

Sconset Lights! How dark the tale
Of wintry night and howling gale!
Sudden shipwreck, all hands lost,
Drowned men on the ledges tossed;
Day disclosing fearful sights
In the surf by Sconset Lights!

Sconset Lights, despair and grief
Have hovered o'er your angry reef!
Sailor wives 'mid tears and blood
Seeking dear ones in the flood.
Where the seagulls wing their flights
Round the rocks of Sconset Lights.

Sconset Lights! Poor mothers moan,
The widows and the orphans groan;
Salt tears fall for vanished lives
In the ship that ne'er arrives;
Longing many a fond heart blights,
For love lost 'neath Sconset Lights.

Sconset Lights, your lamps are bright
When stars illume the tranquil night;
Warm sea breezes fan your tower
Soft as breath from maiden's bower;
Balmy summer crowns your heights,
Smile the skies o'er Sconset Lights!

Sconset Lights are all aglow
O'er crested seas that ebb and flow,
Welcome beacons to the souls
On the ship that homeward rolls,
Warned afar from peril's frights
By the flare of Sconset Lights.

NANTUCKET, 1878.

BAAL.

WHEN Ninus reigned in Nineveh
And Babylon smiled beneath the stars,
And Menes ruled o'er Egypt's plain,
And grim Sesostris waged his wars,
Who were the world's own people then?
Why have they gone and left no sign?
Alas! those hordes of mortal men
Were thou and I, and thine and mine.

Then laid the mother down to rest
Close by the babe her bosom fed,
And children played beside the Nile,
And maids were wooed and women wed;
And shone the full Assyrian moon
In silvery silence on the earth,
As the red blood in myriad hearts
Leapt warm and quick with health and mirth

Three thousand years, and where are we?
Three thousand years and people will
Look up in revery at the stars
That twinkle over Babylon still,
And ask, Who trod the emerald earth?
And wonder why we left no sign;
While the hot blood in glad young hearts
Will leap and dance like ruby wine.

Will the world thus forever roll
And generations come and go
As when King Menes sat enthroned
And old Sesostris scourged the foe?
Who shall the earth's own people be
When we too die and leave no sign?
Alas! these hordes of human men
Are thou and I, and thine and mine.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *May* 9, 1879.

THE CONSTITUTION.

OLD Ironsides! Old Ironsides!
Preserve the decks our heroes trod
When 'mid the roar of hostile guns
They gave their fearless souls to God.
They shed their blood for native land,
They fought that freemen should be free,
With steadfast hearts, and sword in hand,
Beneath the flag of Liberty.

Old Ironsides! Old Ironsides!
Touch not those noble timbers true
That under Captain Hull's command
Performed the deeds that warships do.
The Guerriere she met at sea!
To dare her to a deadly fight
And poured her broadsides gallantly
For honor, glory, and the right.

Old Ironsides! Old Ironsides!
"Hull her," the shout the hero gave
As onward came the Guerriere,
"And sink her in a watery grave."
Yet when the British ensign fell
And Dacres tendered Hull his sword—
"No; one who uses it so well,"
Said he, "should keep it—not a word."

Old Ironsides! Old Ironsides!
'Twas well that gallant Stewart taught
A lesson to the foe when both
The Cyane and Levant were caught.
Torn were their beams by solid shot
The Constitution hurled below.
And not a man on board forgot
The Yankee guns incessant glow.

Old Ironsides! Old Ironsides!
Hail to that ever-hallowed name
That cheers the nations of the earth
With clarion ring of Freedom's fame.
No Vandal stroke should wound her deck,
No sacrilegious blow destroy,
But she should float that grand old wreck,
A grateful people's love and joy.

Old Ironsides! Old Ironsides!
That good old ship should stand for aye,
A relic of the glorious past
Like Nelson's war-worn Victory.
Oh, save the ship that bore on high
The Stars and Stripes through battles' din!
Her brave old flag shall proudly fly
A nation's reverence to win.

OFF CHERBOURG.

OUR flag swung free from the old Kearsarge
As she rode at the mouth of the Scheldt,
And on the horizon's seaward marge
Both snowy sail and shadowy barge
The force of the west wind felt.

Fluttered the cornet aloft at the fore,
Smartly our crew sprang aboard,
Blue-capped middies and sailors more,
Salts just fresh from a cruise ashore,
To serve where the broadsides roared.

Point her prow to the Frenchman's coast,
Off Cherbourg the pirate lies,
Like the Flying Dutchman's stormy ghost,
While her saucy pennon, so full of boast,
Floats in the breeze as it sighs.

Out on the ocean to grapple in fight,
Open her ports to the guns!
Away from the shelter of neutral right,
To the briny sea and the cannon's might,
And the battle that bursts and stuns!

Far in the offing steams the ship,
A rakish and corsair craft
That British silver and gold equip,
The bristling Yankee to taunt and whip,
Her steel guns fore and aft.

Fife and drum quick to quarters play,
Cheer the crew in the shrouds,
Breaking the calm of the summer day
With the crash of arms and the flash of fray,
As death-bolts fly from the clouds.

Winslow stands on the quarterdeck
  Stanch as the steel of his sword;
"Fire!" he shouts, "until that dark speck
Sinks in the waters a helpless wreck:"
  As the broadsides thunder aboard.

"Shell her astern and shatter her side,
  Splinter her, timbers and mast!"
Driven her men to the swelling tide,
Dips her flag as the chain-shot glide,
  And the heat of the combat is past.

Settles the hull of the rover flag,
  With her blackened cannon and crew,
Her bowsprit last, like a treacherous snag,
No more on the ocean to bluster and brag,
  But the waves with her wreck to strew.

Shame on the Briton who steals from the scene
  With Semmes and his foreign horde,
To cheat of their laurels so fresh and green
The heroes who harvests of victory glean,
  Their sickle the patriot sword.

The Alabama lies deep in the sea,
  The English channel her grave,
While the states of the Union are one and free,
With slavery over, and liberty
  Our glory on land and wave.

LESTER WALLACK.

ACTOR, playwright, gentleman!
Living, great in many parts!
Dead, thy lasting love began
To rear its fane in faithful hearts!

Thine, the theatre of life!
Thine, the tragic scene of death!
Thine, the stage with radiance rife!
Thine, the player's laurel wreath!

Wallack! That illustrious name,
Heritage of a glorious past,
Had from thee a wealth of fame
To live while Thespian art shall last!

Hero of the drama, dead
In the sere, the yellow leaf,
Ripe the harvest o'er thy head,
Garnered thy eternal sheaf!

THE MERMAID TAVERN.

WHERE London streets entangled
The Mermaid Tavern stood;
There mugs and tobies jangled,
And sword-belt richly spangled
Wore many a callant good.

The oaken benches centered
About the laden board
When lord or poet entered
And drank from foaming tankard
Where catch and glee were roared.

If one is not mistaken
(And who is always right?)
The sight of Francis Bacon
Was wonted to awaken
A plaudit of delight.

Whene'er Ben Jonson swaggered
Inside the tavern door,
The guests assembled staggered
Afoot to greet the laggard
With flagon to the floor.

And as a dashing hero
A poet bore the palm
Without reproach or fear O,
A Bayard in his sphere O,
Kit Marlowe, brave and calm.

But paled the rays of glory
Before a presence grand,
The theme of song and story
Until the years grow hoary
In every clime and land.

In that historic cavern
  Great Shakespeare trod the stage,
The mighty Bard of Avon
Who crowned the ancient tavern
  With fame from age to age.

'Twas thence that tales of humor
  Throughout the town were told
By ready tongues of rumor,
Like lightnings to illume her
  And dazzling wit unfold.

Lord Bacon's learning planted
  The flowers of wisdom bright,
A boon that ne'er was granted
To other halls so haunted,
  Or other scenes so light.

O hours of golden nectar
  And brown October malt;
Ben Jonson's jokes bedecked-a,
Kit Marlowe's stanzes flecked-a,
  And Shakespeare's Attic salt!

IN SHAKESPEARE'S TIME.

THE English maid, Elizabeth,
Than whom no loftier lady lived,
Or grander sovereign e'er drew breath;
Who ne'er by man was wooed or wived,
Nor e'er was widow to her death,
Was Queen sublime
In Shakespeare's time.

Old London town was festive then,
By bustling Thames, in crowded Strand,
With beauteous women, honored men,
Whose fame was blazoned through the land,
When Shakespeare's, Jonson's, Marlowe's pen
Gave soul to rhyme
In Shakespeare's time.

Lord Bacon held the chancery seal,
Sir Walter Raleigh sailed the seas,
God's bounty blessed the common weal
Where England's standard kissed the breeze,
And all throughout the realm were leal
At Albion's prime
In Shakespeare's time.

The dramatists of England shed
The glow of genius on the stage;
Poet and playwright triumphs led
Which glorified that golden age;
Philosophy and poetry wed
To dulcet chime
In Shakespeare's time.

And of that marriage there were born
The fancies of a godlike brain,
To glad the spirit in its morn
And soothe the soul at night again,
Fragrant with life when age has worn
As fresh wild thyme
In Shakespeare's time.

Prince Hamlet, Richard, old King Lear
Evoked the wonder of mankind;
Othello's rage filled all with fear,
While Romeo's love charmed every mind.
The world awoke with smile or tear
To farthest clime
In Shakespeare's time.

The flowers of Shakespeare, Bacon's fruit,
Upon each ever-blossoming stem
To wit and wisdom rendered suit
In richest robe with rarest gem;
Nor did the voice of skeptic bruit
Of letters' crime
In Shakespeare's time.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH AND HIS PIPE.

IN day-dreams I love to rove with thee
On the banks of the winding Loire,
To listen to thy sweet minstrelsy
For the peasantry's kind pourboire;
A coarse black loaf, a bumper of wine,
A couch of the fresh elm leaves,
A glee or gavotte at the tavern's sign,
And a jig 'neath the jutting eaves.

I sip with thee, Noll, a full red glass
To the vine-dresser's worldly weal,
To the bliss of the laughing lad and lass
Who a kiss in the gloaming steal!
I pledge to thee, Noll, and the tender lays
That out of thy reed-pipe flow,
To the village damsels of bygone days
And the gallants of long ago!

Pipe on thy songs of the fruitful vine,
Thy ballads of true-love bliss:
As we taste the sweets of the ruby wine
And the cheeks of the maidens kiss!
Pipe on to the children who press the knee,
To the grandam and grandsire gray,
And the harvesters shouting in lightsome glee
To the strains of the pipe we play!

I trudge with thee, Noll, o'er hill and dale
And list to the sound of thy voice,
In a rural poem, or rustic tale,
That makes my glad heart rejoice.
I care not how far is the foreign shore,
Nor tarry for tempest or rain,
For thy Gentle Hermit is heard once more,
And thy Vicar is seen again.

Through Loire's bright valley we'll fondly roam,
And join in the villagers' dance!
And sing with the peasants who deck their home
With the gorgeous flowers of France!
I'll follow thy footsteps, dear jovial Noll,
To thrill at the sound of thy pipe,
Famed pastoral minstrel, whose melodies roll
Where the fruit of the heart is ripe!

ROBERT BURNS AT MOSSGIEL.

THERE were two men at the plow,
Turning furrows in the soil,
With the sweat upon their brow,
Sturdy, honest sons of toil;
Th' old horse that each one drove
Picked its way among the clods,
As the field-mouse downward dove
In its hole beneath the sods.
At Mossgiel!

One of those who trod the earth,
With his clumsy raw-hide boots,
In that arid field of dearth,
Stumbling over rocks and roots,
Said to him who followed nigh,
A fine, tall, and manly youth,
With a bold though dreamy eye,
"Let us plow a match, forsooth!"
At Mossgiel!

Like a claymore 'mong the ranks
Of a hostile clan they cut
Through the clay of sterile banks,
And each rough and rugged rut;
As they labored all the day,
Striving both to do their best,
Not a word would either say
Till the sun sank in the west,
At Mossgiel!

Dully one lad plodded on,
  Thinking only of his task,
While the other farmer's son
  Would in vain the question ask:
"Why the siller and the gold
  Comes to hard, material men,
Beyond mortal needs fourfold,
  But cheers not the poet's pen?"
    At Mossgiel!

"Still," he cried, "my heart will cling,
  In despite of weal or woe,
To the songs I love to sing
  While the whistling breezes blow;
For the mither in our home
  Will I work from morn till night,
Though my fancy free shall roam
  Through the realms of rapt delight."
    At Mossgiel!

On they walked for weary hours,
  O'er the stones and barren land,
'Mid the sunshine and the showers,
  With the hafts in either hand;
Till the quicker of the twain
  Quit his plow in gladsome haste,
Shouting, "Rab, the match I gain,
  No more effort need you waste!"
    At Mossgiel!

And the slower of them, then,
  A quick start from revery gave;
He had lost by furrows ten
  And not now the day could save;
But a glory round his head,
  Where the crowns of saints belong,
Shone upon him as he said,
  "While I plowed I made a song!"
    At Mossgiel!

Aye, a song he sang indeed,
That rang out around the world,
For a flower and not a weed
From that furrow was unfurled;
And his field mouse, 'mid her fears,
Cowering, trembling on the ground,
Moved the souls of men to tears
That in human hearts abound.
At Mossgiel!

THE DUEL OF BURR AND HAMILTON.

UPON the heights of Weehawken when fields were fresh and green,
And ripples at the river's side shone bright with sunshine sheen,
A solemn group of silent men stood 'mid the tangled trees
That hid that solitary spot and waved in summer's breeze.

A secret tryst, a sacred nook for lovers' fervent bliss
Where Coryden might softly sigh, and Amaryllis kiss,
And blithesome birds a rondel sing in merry strains of love,
While buds and blossoms wooed and wed in nest-built boughs above.

Who dared the wage of battle at so halcyon an hour
In that peaceful sanctuary, that pastoral bridal bower?
Could hero be so warlike, or human hate so strong
As to defile so fair a fane with mortal wanton wrong?

Ah! souls of men are raging seas when swept by tempest blast
And wrecks of dearest hopes and aims lie ocean deep at last;
The fiery stars are less aflame than passion in the proud,
And rivalry and malice strike as lightnings from the cloud.

Within that shady wooded shrine a tragic act was near
To move the hearts of strongest men with many a bitter tear;
Old comrades of the drill and camp, the best on tented field,
Had met in duel to the death as knights of lance and shield.

One, Hamilton, the great and good, and Washington's true friend;
The other, a conspirator, bold Burr to the dauntless end;
Each chieftain's crest a champion crowned beside the shores of Styx.
Brave sons of the Revolution both, stanch spirits of seventy-six.

Two soldiers face to face were they, who bore the battle's brunt;
Two statesmen there with tight-set lips, and firm, defiant front;
Their seconds paced the deadly ground, and planned the fatal sign,
Then gave their arms to erring men, erect in martial line.

No flush or shade on either brow, no fear their forms displayed
As sharp rang out the signal "Fire!" and foes the word obeyed;
The bullets whistled on the wind to work their dire behest,
And Hamilton fell wounded sore, his head upon his breast.

Oh, colonel of the patriot days, a dark deed hast thou done
'Neath cloudless skies and rustling leaves lit by the morning sun!
The birds will ne'er sing sweet for thee, nor wild flowers brightly bloom,
The voice of conscience whispers, "Thou hast sealed thy brother's doom!"

The ghost of that scene haunted him through dreary years of shame,
E'en children hastened past his door and shuddered at his name;
Alone he drifted, sad and stern, away upon that sea,
Where derelict and shipwrecked lives are lost to obloquy.

GENERAL GARFIELD'S MOTHER.

MOTHER, mother, in the doorway
Waiting, waiting for a word,
Watching, watching for a message,
Tearful, trusting in the Lord.
Would our wealth of love had nerved you,
Would a people's prayers had served you,
To good cheer afford!

Mother, mother, in the doorway,
Once you nursed a baby boy,
Taught his little feet to toddle,
Taught his helpless hands to toy
With his playthings, prattling, smiling,
Your young motherhood beguiling
With his infant joy.

Mother, mother, in the doorway,
You who showed him virtue's path,
Guided him past childhood's perils,
Through the ways removed from wrath.
Well that son repaid your guarding
Love with richest love rewarding
In life's after-math.

Mother, mother, in the doorway,
Resting in the noontide glow,
On your white hair seemed to linger
Kisses of the long ago.
There with later kisses blending
As the nation's ruler bending
Pressed the mother's brow.

Mother, mother, in the doorway,
  Stricken with a mother's grief,
You were looking where the lonely
  We are told shall find relief:
Looking far beyond the valley
Toward the field where soldiers rally
    From the battle brief.

Mother, mother, in the doorway,
  Womanly in hours of woe
When his country's soul was with him
  Where the waters ebb and flow.
With our history his is written,
And our hearts with yours were smitten
    And our heads bent low.

Mother, mother, in the doorway,
  Great his work and bravely done,
On the nation's roll of honor
  Proud the place he nobly won:
All his fame who dearly cherish
Will not let his memory perish,
    Your immortal son!

ELBERON.

ABOVE the sea the stars were gently shining
And twinkling in the night
As life and death with brawny arms entwining
Wrestled in weary fight.

The whispering waters hushed their idle prattle,
The wild winds held their breath,
To watch the ebb and flow of the fierce battle
Waged between life and death.

Both earth and sky were silent in their sorrow—
The end had come at last—
And burning tears of nature ere the morrow
Told that the worst was passed.

A patriot soul had left its suffering pillow
And gone out on the sea
Toward the stars so far beyond the billow
Which beckon you and me.

Upon the sea the stars were softly shining
And shimmering in the night,
As winds and waves their gentle arms entwining
Wept sadly at the sight.

ALOHA!

RHYTHMIC word of kindly greeting,
Used alike by prince and peasant,
Strangers' heart to set abeating
With its welcome warm and pleasant—
Thrill my senses at the sound
As my grateful pulses bound!

Hear it spoke by children's voices
Gay at sport in grassy byways!
Hear it 'mong the merry noises
Of the meadows and the highways
Falling mellow on the air
From red lips so ripe and rare!

When the moonlight glints the ocean
With a sheen of silver splendor,
And the waves with drowsy motion
To the sands their homage tender,
Then in dreams that word is breathed
And a web of beauty wreathed.

Let me listen to aloha
From my gentle island-brother,
For it seems a word of more
Cordial cheer than any other
As the salutation peals
And upon my spirit steals!

And aloha let me utter
In a friendship true and faithful,
'Mid the leaves that fitful flutter
And the clouds that darken wrathful,
When the sea storm flings its foam
On the rocks where fishers roam!

And aloha let me offer
  When the trade winds fan the Pali
And a dawn refreshing proffer
  To the green Nuuanu valley;
When the whitecaps kiss our deck
And with froth the ocean fleck!

When the fleecy, downy masses
  In the heavens sweep the mountains,
And the breeze that softly passes
  Wakes to life its snowy fountains,
Will I give that greeting glad
To each laughing lass and lad—

Who with garlands on their bosoms
  And bright lais about the forehead
Of the gaudy, gilded blossoms
  That adorn the islands torrid,
Meet me dancing down the dells
To the chimes of chapel bells.

Yes, I love the winsome manner
  Of the peaceful island people
'Neath the guava and banana
  And the palm tree's russet steeple!
Open hearts and open doors
Beckon to those tropic shores.

Yield I back in greetings golden
  As I tread the coral islands
The Hawaiian *salve* olden
  Of the coast and azure highlands,
An aloha from the soul
Where Pacific's surges roll.

Dulcet tones of hearty welcome
  Fond alike to gay and dreary
To my memory like a bell come
  With their music light and cheery,
And I wish with loving smiles
Warm alohas to those isles.

HONOLULU, 1883.

ON THE RIO GRANDE.

MANY a day has sped, I say,
Since I've tasted the old Big Sandy,
For my ranch is now in the Texas slough,
And I drink of the Rio Grande—
The stream from which Taylor watered his grog
When he tippled with Santa Anna,
And toasted his health in a soldierly nog,
And a rough-and-ready manner.

So I pledge their fame and heroic name,
Forgotten be their memory never,
Or the battles they won 'neath a Mexican sun,
And I drink to their glory forever,
By the stream from which Taylor watered his grog
When he tippled with Santa Anna,
And toasted his health in a soldierly nog
And a rough-and-ready manner.

COLORADO, 1884.

THE POETS' CORNER.

WESTMINSTER Abbey! Who can scan thy nave,
Sacred to ashes dear to mortal man,
Without an awe-struck soul beside the grave
Of genius brightest since the world began?

What flights of fancy! Chaucer takes the lead
From Canterbury with his pilgrim band,
Whom Spenser and the Faerie Queene outspeed.
To waft a greeting from the spirit land.

Then rare Ben Jonson, Briton to the core,
And doughty Drayton glide upon the stage,
With Cowley, Congreve, Dryden, dust no more,
Their signets stamp upon the breathing page.

Macpherson, classic Milton, thoughtful Gray,
Mat. Pryor, Rowe and Davenant flit past,
As David Garrick treads the Appian Way
In royal purple for great Cæsar cast.

The age of good Queen Anne, with Johnson wise,
Dogmatic, dictatorial, sagely grand;
Warm-hearted Goldsmith, whom the people prize;
Melodious Gay, and Addison the bland!

And Campbell, Sheridan and Southey crowd
The azure field of galaxies sublime,
Before accoutered chiefs and courtiers proud,
The kings of letters' realm throughout all time.

And as one dreams and ponders all these things,
A child's small voice comes cheery to the ear,
And Tiny Tim a Christmas Carol sings
As on the grave of Dickens falls a tear.

No sculptured urn above the sacred dust,
  No tablature to chronicle his fame;
But there amid the ages' crumbling rust
  A simple slab to mark the well-loved name.

Above this Thackeray's bust in radiance seen
  Tells truer than tall monuments of stone
That memory keeps his mighty image green
  In love and tender reverence alone.

And now the bard who sang us Locksley Hall,
  Godiva and the Idylls of the King
Is garnered as the autumn harvests fall
  And ripened boughs abroad their brown leaves fling.

O poet-knight, thy quest was not in vain,
  A soul like thine in faith can never fail;
The cross of Christ is seen by thee again,
  Sir Galahad has found the Holy Grail!

O Tennyson, the last to soar among
  Those souls of mighty ones from earth set free,
No more shall mortals listen to thy song,
  But bards celestial chant thy themes with thee!

THE LIGHTS OF BALTIMORE.

I STAND upon Patuxent's shore
And see the lights of Baltimore—
A silvery drapery of the sky,
Where shadows of the city lie;
The light and shade of human life,
An intermingling peace and strife,
The smiles, the tears, the joy, the gloom,
The burial pall, the bridal bloom,
The teeming city's ceaseless roar,
Amid the lights of Baltimore.

The city streets beneath the light,
The crowds that circle in the night,
The shops ablaze with gleaming wares,
The sidewalks gay with gladsome pairs,
The music halls alive with throngs
That sip the glass and hear the songs,
The mortal stage of mimic scenes,
The wanton crowned with wreath of greens,
The mellow fruit with bitter core,
Amid the lights of Baltimore.

The student pale from stress of thought
To win the laurels learning wrought,
The begging vagrants of the curb
Who wealth's complacency disturb,
The drunkard in his sottish sleep
While wife and children starve and weep,
The widow and the orphan lone
Who wanting bread receive a stone
In mockery of the words of yore,
Amid the lights of Baltimore.

The felon in his shameful cell,
The snowflake once so pure that fell,
The victim silent in her blood
Where yesterday a bride she stood,
The belles of opera and ball,
The beaux who flock at folly's call,
The gambler on the fatal road,
Its goal the pistol's leaden load,
Instead of fortune's golden store
Amid the lights of Baltimore.

And as I watch the changeful glow
The shadows fade, the lights burn low
And darkness flings its dreamy folds
O'er every soul the city holds;
And where the weird fantastic glare
Showed me those specters in the air
The stars shine out in bliss above
With all their wealth of hope and love
And bless the scenes I saw before,
Amid the lights of Baltimore.

YARROW BRAE, 1892.

SHERIDAN.

AMONG the military dead,
The marshals of great wars,
A general who armies led,
A grand and mighty Mars,
The foremost in the battle's front,
The bravest of the brave,
Defied the hostile bayonet's brunt
Where flags of heroes wave,
Phil Sheridan of Winchester,
Who trampled on defeat,
And turned unbeaten forces there
Back from their rash retreat
To win a glorious victory,
With flashing federal sword,
Forward thy spirit marches free
In the squadrons of the Lord.
A legacy of soldier fame
Thy country gained from thee,
And all the land shall hail thy name
With songs of liberty.
The love that glows our souls to cheer
Each patriot breast shall fill;
The sword that waved at Winchester
Was the sword of Bunker Hill.

BROWN OCTOBER.

FOR dolce far niente and idling in præsenti,
October is the month of the year;
A fire in every hovel,
With chestnuts on the shovel,
And balmy, laughing autumn crisp and clear.

For riding, rowing, walking; for thinking, reading, talking,
October is the month of the year;
With sunshine on the river,
With frosts to bring a shiver,
And bracing winds that make the blood dance freer.

For shooting, fishing, sailing, astern the tackle trailing,
October is the month of the year;
Roast apples on the table,
Doves cooing on the gable,
Nor drought nor storm to turn the prospect drear.

For dolce far niente, and dreaming in præsenti,
October is the month of the year;
Then hearts of men grow lightest,
And health and hope grow brightest—
A glad to-day to-morrow makes more dear.

YARROW BRAE, 1895.

SANTIAGO.

FROM our Yankee fleet rose a thund'rous roar,
A deafening shout from five hundred throats,
When our throbbing crews saw the ships near shore,
The yellow and red on the Spanish boats;
Their shout of wrath was the firm refrain—
"Remember the Maine! Remember the Maine!"

Not only the rattle and roar of lead,
But a roar from the throats of determined men
Sworn to chastise for their comrades dead,
A hundred for one in that cooped-up pen;
A hundred for one of their shipmates slain,
Meeting death in the Maine! Meeting death in the Maine.

And every officer felt the thrill
Of that glorious shout from our sailors brave,
Panting in combat to conquer or kill
And make of that harbor a Spanish grave.
They vowed that their guns should destruction rain,
On account of the Maine! On account of the Maine!

Swift came the conflict of ship with ship,
The duel of broadsides and man to man;
To the Yankees the Spaniards their colors dip
In the grandest of triumphs since war began:
The decks of the Spanish they justly stain
For the sake of the Maine! For the sake of the Maine!

"Remember the Maine! Remember the Maine!"
The war cry that maddened our men in fight,
As they scuttled the squadron of vanquished Spain,
Thrice-armed in the battle for God and right;
Thrice-armed in the victory brave men gain—
Avenged was the Maine! Avenged was the Maine!

OUR SOLDIERS' SONG.

"When the destruction of Cervera's fleet became known before Santiago the soldiers cheered wildly, and, with one accord through miles of trenches, began singing 'The Star-Spangled Banner.'"

SINGING "The Star-Spangled Banner"
Right in the jaws of death!
Singing our glorious anthem,
Some with their latest breath!
The strains of that solemn music
Through the spirit will ever roll,
Thrilling with martial ardor
The depths of each patriot soul.

Hearing the hum of the bullets!
Eager to charge the foe!
Biding the call to battle,
Where crimson heart streams flow!
Thinking of home and dear ones,
Of mother, of child, of wife,
They sang "The Star-Spangled Banner"
On that field of deadly strife.

They sang with the voices of heroes,
In the face of the Spanish guns,
As they leaned on their loaded rifles,
With the courage that never runs.
They sang to our glorious emblem,
Upraised on that war-worn sod,
As the saints in the old arena
Sang a song of praise to God.

AT GENERAL WAUCHOPE'S GRAVE.

WHAT do the pipes in the gloaming play
To the kilts as they march in column?
"The Flowers o' the Forest are a' wede away"
And "Lochaber" the dirges solemn.

One of their heroes in battle sank,
One of their best and their bravest
Fell at the front of their foremost rank—
Thou takest the life Thou gavest!

Bold was his soul as the Highland hills
And warm as a Lowland valley;
A man who the measure of manhood fills,
A chieftain the clans to rally.

True to his comrades, his flag, his queen,
With his breast to the foe they found him,
And laid him to rest where the sod is green
With a Scottish tartan 'round him.

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